

## WEST VIRGINIA NEGROES LEAVE FARMS TO WORK IN COAL MINES

Survey by Negro Welfare Bureau Discloses Interesting Facts—Many Changes in Life of Race in This Country Since Civil War.

That the negroes of West Virginia are leaving the farm lands to work in the coal fields is disclosed by the first annual report of the West Virginia Bureau of Negro Welfare and Statistics. In 1870, prior to the beginning of the development of the coal fields in the southern tier of counties, there were in West Virginia 17,980 negroes. Jefferson, Kanawha, Berkeley, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Monroe and Hardy counties contained more than two-thirds of the entire negro population of the state and more than half of the total was found in Jefferson, Kanawha, Greenbrier, Berkeley and Hampshire counties.

In Slavery Days  
The bulk of the negro population was in the rich farming counties of the state, but the farms were small in comparison with the plantations of Virginia and other southern states, and the crops were varied. Previous to the emancipation, the contact between master and negro was constant and kindly; the overseer driver formed no important part of the labor system of what is now West Virginia. The number of laborers on each farm was few and their work required intelligence. For the most part, the negroes lived the life about them; their slavery was half freedom. The census report for 1860 shows about one negro in every five within what is now West Virginia as being free. Many of these as well as some of the slaves could read and write; so the negro population came to its emancipation with intelligence and self-reliance and ambition. They were so well prepared for freedom that race relations in West Virginia have never been marked by the intense irritation which characterized race relations in the south. Thus, the ground work was already laid for the splendid relations of harmony and good-will which have for the most part existed between the races throughout the state to this day.

The early negro population was homogeneous, intelligent, not markedly excluded from the general life and engaged in occupations which made for thrift and a sound social order. Most of this population and its descendants have gone from this state to the north and west, but some are still found in the farming communities, cities and towns and the kindly feeling between them and their white neighbors is unchanged. But only occasionally in the great negro population over twenty-five years of age do we see a

Since 1870, or during the great industrial expansion, the negro population has changed in numbers, increasing at a very rapid rate; its position in the state has changed; it has changed its occupation, its relation to the general population and, to a large extent, its composition.

Increase in Population.  
In the decade from 1870 to 1880, there was an increase in negro population in West Virginia of 14 per cent; in the decade from 1880 to 1890 an increase of 33 per cent; from 1890 to 1900 an increase of 48 per cent and from 1900 to 1920 an increase of 25 per cent. While the percentage of increase from 1890 to 1910 was greater than from 1910 to 1920, the numerical increase for the decade of 1910 to 1920 was the greatest in the history of the state.

All of the figures relating to population are based upon the United States census reports, because they are official, but they are said to be glaringly inaccurate as regards negroes in coal mining camps. For example, on all coal mining operations in McDowell County a representative of the McDowell Times, a negro newspaper, checked the negro population behind the census enumerator in 1920 and found 148 negro men who were not enumerated. This is accounted for by reason of the fact that many negroes working in and about the mines "stayed in shanties," that is, in mining parlance, one or more men live in company-owned houses and do their own cooking. When they leave the house to work, it is locked and no one is there until they return from work. The census enumerator passed while they were at work and did not return. It is estimated by the McDowell Times, based upon its investigation in McDowell County alone, that approximately 2,000 negroes were not enumerated, and this condition prevailed throughout the coal mining sections of the state.

There are one or more negroes in every county in the state, except one; yet the bulk of the negro population of West Virginia is very compactly grouped in a few great coal mining counties. While in 1870 more than two-thirds of the negro population was in Jefferson, Berkeley, Hampshire and Hardy counties in the eastern panhandle and Kanawha, Greenbrier and Monroe counties in the southern part of the state—all great farming counties, today 21 per cent of the entire negro population of the state lives in the great coal mining county of McDowell and 67 per cent of the negro population of the state lives in McDowell, Fayette, Kanawha, Raleigh, Mercer, Logan, Mingo and Wyoming counties—all mining counties.

Change in Occupation.  
The occupations of the negro have changed from a predominantly agricultural one to one of mining even in Kanawha County with 10.3 per cent of the negro population which had a large negro farming population in

1870, now has only 18 negro farmers, its negro population being employed principally in coal mining and other industries. It is significant that more than 75 per cent of the negro male wage earning population of West Virginia is now employed in the coal mining industry. The early negro population was bred to the soil; more than 60 per cent of the present negro population was born beyond the confines of West Virginia—the greatest number coming from Virginia, beyond the sections in the Carolinas, Alabama, Blue Ridge Mountains, and similar Georgia and Tennessee where land holdings by the thousand acres and where the single crop was cultivated with gang labor. These negroes had not enjoyed the friendly and helpful contact with the white natives of their respective states enjoyed by the negroes of West Virginia with the native whites in the counties in which a majority of them lived and, when they came to West Virginia to cut the right-of-ways for railroads and work in the new and rapidly developing coal fields, they located in counties where native whites had had no contact with negroes whatsoever, many of them having reached manhood without ever seeing a negro. Along with the negroes came white men from the same states. These white men, like the negroes, were poor and all of them wholly or almost illiterate. They had worked upon the farms and their contact with negroes was not of the elevating kind. They met in West Virginia upon terms of industrial and political equality. Along with them came many fugitives from justice of both races to escape punishment for crimes committed in their native states and crooks and criminals of all degrees. Wages were high for those days, money was plentiful, the country was almost inaccessible, railroad contractors wanted men to work and did not care about the kind or character of men. To hold the men as long as possible, in many cases they brought in gangs of lewd women and settled them in the camps. The same condition existed in the camps of many new coal developments and the enforcement of law was extremely lax because the contractors and operators did not want the men run away. These kind of people, with the social conditions existing in the newly developed counties, caused the native whites in

### First Woman Senator at Work



Mrs. W. H. Felton, 87, appointed by the governor of Georgia to fill the unexpired term of Senator Thomas Watson, deceased, shown at work in her study at Cartersville, Ga.

most cases to draw away to themselves and there was a marked change in the relations of the new negro toward the general population than that which existed between the old negroes and whites in the farming counties with their fixed social order.

During the two decades from 1890 to 1910, which marked the greatest development of the coal fields of southern West Virginia and the great increase in negro population, crimes of murder and robbery were of very frequent occurrence and, in these countries, whites lynched negroes and each other and there are a few cases where negroes lynched other negroes, but none of these lynchings was for crime against white men and it is worthy of note that in these counties filled with a crude and illiterate population, with criminals of all kinds in large numbers and weak law enforcement officers, there were in the early days of development and there have been since only a few cases of negroes charged with crimes against women of either race.

Much of this new negro population were hardened criminals when they came to this state and the conditions which they found upon arrival they took for license

advantage of the wonderful opportunities offered in the young state for the improvement of their conditions and to give to their children a greater chance.

It is to be regretted that only a few of the splendid native negro stock remained to add their help and advice in the solution of the problems which confronted the negro race and the State because of the great influx of negroes, who knew nothing about West Virginia its history and traditions and had little if any acquaintance with the type of white men living here. Practically all of the constructive work of the advancement of the great mass of negro migrants to this state has been done by the educated negroes who came from other states.

### CAREFUL CROSSING CAMPAIGN SUCCESS

According to word received at the local offices of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, the Careful Crossing Campaign, designed to warn automobile drivers and others to be cautious at railroad grade crossings, which began June 1 and ended September 30, was a gratifying success so far as the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad is concerned.

Figures are not yet available from all the railroads of the country which took part in the campaign, and it may be a week or more before the safety section of the American Railway Association which conducted the campaign, has reports from all lines and combines them. If the Baltimore

& Ohio's average of reduction of accidents is maintained on all the railroads, the expense of the drive will have been well spent. It is said.

Actual collisions between trains and automobiles were reduced on the Baltimore & Ohio 13 per cent, as compared with the accidents in the same four months last year. This in spite of the fact that there was a 12 per cent increase in the number of automobiles registered in the country. It seemed to indicate that drivers had given consideration to the campaign slogan, "Cross Crossings Cautiously," and it is the earnest desire of railroad officials that the lesson will not be forgotten.

There was a reduction of 17 per cent in all kinds of accidents at crossings, including those to pedestrians, automobiles, other vehicles etc. Pedestrians were especially careful when passing over the tracks for only two persons were killed and three injured. One of the persons killed and two of those injured had impaired hearing. One of these casualties occurred in August one in July and three in June.

The reduction in persons killed in crossing accidents of all kinds amounted to 41 per cent and is regarded by Baltimore & Ohio officials as a splendid record. There were thirty-seven fatalities last year compared to twenty-two this year. The reduction in injuries amounted to 9 per cent.

There were some narrow escapes from casualties on the part of automobilists. Twenty of them ran into gates that were lowered for the passage of trains. These collisions probably saved the lives of these careless drivers. There

were ten other machines driven into the gates of trains moving over the crossings or standing on them. In two of these latter accidents nine persons were injured, one machine containing eight persons, all of whom were severely injured because the driver could not stop his car in time to prevent his striking a moving train.

There were 37 accidents out of a total of 123 which had no right to occur at all, or 30 per cent were due to the absolute disregard of gates or the fact that a train already was on the crossing. There seems to be little chance at all of saving drivers of this kind, but the Baltimore & Ohio will still endeavor to convince them that the cautious crossing of tracks is the only safe method. This plan of education includes the distribution of appeals to the drivers and checking up of operators as they pass over the tracks. When they fail to take precautions they are to be notified by cards that are sent out to addresses obtained through finding out the owner of the automobile license.

### SMOOT DECLARES GOD HEARD PRAYERS

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah, Oct. 9.—Senator Smoot of Utah, member of the twelve apostles of the Mormon Church, told the ninety-third general conference of members of that faith yesterday that God heard and answered the prayers of the people for Mrs. Harding during her recent illness. Mr. Smoot also referred to the time twenty years ago when

charges of disloyalty were brought against him and declared he then was supported and strengthened by an appeal to God.

Senator Smoot told of visiting the White House four weeks ago when Mrs. Harding's condition was regarded as critical. "I told the President," said the Senator, "that from home tonight my earnest prayers would go up for Mrs. Harding's recovery. Millions were praying for her, and shortly before midnight word came from the physicians at the bedside that the tide had turned and that the proposed operation would not be necessary. God had heard and answered the prayers of the people."

"Speakers at the conference made it plain that members of the Mormon Church should exercise their elective franchise to place in office at the November election those men who stood for rigid enforcement of the laws upon the statute books of the nation and state, including the prohibition law in all its provisions and the state anti-cigarette law. The conference concluded by the sustaining of the incumbent authorities of the church."

BENEFIT SUPPER PLANNED.  
Oyster soup, pickles, coffee, cake and ice cream will be served at Carl Lough's old house in Eldora, next Saturday night, beginning at 7 o'clock, when a supper will be served for the benefit of the Eldora M. P. Church.

The "sugar ash" of Sicily contains a sap that hardens into cane sugar which the natives use without refining.

## Trade Expansion Specials!

For Thursday, Friday and Saturday  
October 12th, 13th, 14th

We have grouped together a most unusual offering of EXTRA SPECIALS for Fairmont's Trade Expansion Days—Every single article offered is guaranteed to be a value you cannot duplicate ordinarily for much more than the following low prices.

### Dollar Day Specials

For Thursday's Dollar Day we have five superb specials—Look the following list over very carefully.

Grenadine Two Tone Silk Ties—Ties that regularly sell for \$1.50 each. Offer special for Dollar Day and Bargain Day at ..... **\$1**

Pure Silk Knit Ties—Regular \$1 grades, offered very special for Dollar Day and Bargain Day at 2 for ..... **\$1**

Arrow and Ide Soft and Starched Collars—one of the biggest values you'll find anywhere—Special for Dollar Day only ..... **\$1**

Dress Shirts—With collars attached and neckbands. Neat styles in plain colors and checks. Values up to \$2.00. Offered special for Dollar Day at ..... **\$1**

Silk lisle and pure lisle hose with clocks. The famous guaranteed Wovenright hose and the well known Monito make. Regular 75c values, 2 Pairs for ..... **\$1**

### For Bargain Day and Labor's Jubilee Day

The following groups of merchandise that we are offering special for Bargain Day and Labor's Jubilee Day are the most worth while values you'll be able to find anywhere.

### Very Special Prices on Entire Stock of Men's Shirts

Regular \$1.25 and \$1.50 Dress Shirts—With collars attached and neckbands. Extra big values at ..... **95c**

Regular \$2.00 Dress Shirts—Neat Fancy stripes with collars attached and neckbands. Very special values at ..... **\$1.37**

Our finest Dress Shirts—There are Madras, Pure Silks, Linens, Broadcloth, Crepe-de-chine, Tub Silks, Jersey Silks, etc.,—in fact our very best shirts priced at—

**\$2.95, \$3.95, \$4.95 and \$5.95**

### Get Your Free Ticket on the Ford Car

Every dollar you spend with us during these three days of Trade Expansion entitles you to a Free Ticket for the Ford Touring Car that is to be given away in front of the Court House Saturday night.

Men's 2-Pants Suits  
**\$19.00**

Extra good high grade Suits, made by well-known makers of Men's good clothing—Suits that you would expect to pay \$25.00 to \$30.00 for ordinarily. An extra special for men wanting an extra pair of trousers

Young Men's Suits  
**\$15.00**

Young men's all-wool Cassimere Sport model suits that are well worth every cent of \$22.50 and during these Three Trade Expansion Days you can take your pick for this extremely low price of \$15.00.

### Very Special Prices On All New Fall Clothing

MEN'S NEW FALL HATS—And a wonderful assortment of styles, materials and colors to choose from. **\$1.95, \$2.65, \$3.35, \$3.95 and \$4.50**

YOUNG FELLOWS' SWEATERS—In all colors or combinations. Specially priced at—**\$1.95 to \$8.95**

A Complete Line Of New Fall Overcoats

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Get to Know Us — It Pays  
107 Main St. Opp. State Bank.

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